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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women: Review of mainstreaming in organizations of the United Nations system

Mid-term review of the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report summarizes information provided by entities in the United Nations system on their efforts in 1996 and 1997 to implement the activities in the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001. It also highlights obstacles encountered, and makes a number of recommendations for action in light of experience gained to date.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 1996/34, the Economic and Social Council endorsed the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001, and called for a mid-term review, which is to be undertaken by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-second session, in 1998. The Secretary-General was requested to submit a progress report on the implementation of the plan for purposes of the mid-term review.

2. The plan was formulated at the end of 1995 pursuant to a decision of the Commission on the Status of Women. It was structured around the 12 critical areas of concern contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women) in 1995. It was also formulated to reflect relevant mandates from other recent United Nations conferences and summits. Activities were clustered under each critical area according to a typology of action, i.e., information collection and database development; research and analysis; operational activities, including advisory services, technical assistance and training; and public outreach and information dissemination. The plan largely addressed activities targeted to women but also included gender-responsive activities that were planned as part of mainstream programmes and projects.

3. In order to prepare the present report, the Division for the Advancement of Women, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat sought information on implementation from all entities of the United Nations system, including on issues raised by the Commission and the Committee on Programme Coordination when they reviewed the draft of the plan in 1996. As of 5 December 1997, the following 33 entities had responded:

Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat

Division for the Advancement of Women

Population Division

Former Department for Development Support and Management Services

Statistics Division

Department of Public Information

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)

International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/WTO)

Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)

United Nations Interregional Crime Research Institute (UNICRI)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

United Nations University (UNU)

United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

World Bank

World Food Programme (WFP)

World Health Organization (WHO)

4. Since the plan was formulated at the end of 1995 and approved in mid-1996, the actual period of implementation has been about 18 months. Some respondents noted, therefore, that most of their activities are still in the implementation stage.

5. Despite considerable overall progress in implementing the wide array of activities envisaged under the plan and a policy commitment to the proposals spelled out at the Fourth World Conference on Women, a number of obstacles have been encountered, including lack of data and of methodologies and indicators for monitoring progress; lack of tools for tracking expenditures for cross-sectoral activities, at both headquarters and field levels; inadequate human and financial resources; low levels of commitment, both politically in some countries and at the level of management in some agencies of the United Nations system; cultural and other constraints, and delays in delivery of technical assistance. Those obstacles are discussed in more detail in section III below.

II. Brief overview of progress in implementation in the 12 critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action

6. A brief overview of progress in the implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action by the United Nations system at mid-term is set out below. The overview is linked to the strategic orientation/focus under each critical area of concern, as spelled out in the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001.

7. In the strategic orientation/focus of United Nations system action in the critical area of concern "Women and poverty", the importance of women's empowerment to raise their standard of living and reduce their poverty has been emphasized in keeping with the Platform for Action. Implementation during the period under review has therefore included support for women entrepreneurs, particularly in rural areas, including home-based workers; integrated rural development; studies of female migration; credit access for women, and strengthening of the informal sector. Integrated approaches to rural development identified rural women and girls as key agents, a gender-sensitive approach which led to increased assistance to rural women producers.[1]

8. In the critical area "Education and training of women", the strategic orientation/focus of United Nations system activities indicated in the plan has been based on a rights principle. United Nations entities have developed and supported the use of appropriate training tools to strengthen women's skills and those of teachers in areas ranging from literacy and basic education to science and technology. Advocacy for girls' education has been undertaken, and there has been wider acceptance of the empirical evidence that educating girls and women raises productivity and reduces fertility rates.

9. In addressing the critical area "Women and health", the strategic focus has been concentrated on human immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV)/acquired immunodeficiency disease (AIDS), reproductive health, and the reduction of maternal and child mortality and morbidity. Environmental health, gender and drug abuse, the impact of tropical diseases on women and the health effects of female genital mutilation also received increased attention. A joint World Health Organization (WHO)/United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)/United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) statement has been issued on female genital mutilation, and UNFPA appointed a special ambassador on the issue. Implementation under this critical area also addressed objectives in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994.

10. Prevention and the root causes of violence against women have been the focus of activities in the critical area "Violence against women". Research on violence against women has continued, as have advocacy and support for policy measures on violence against women and new forms of protection for the victims of abuse, as well as increased collection and dissemination of data. The Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women has reported on the situation in various countries, and her mandate has been renewed by the Commission on Human Rights. The first grants have been made under the Trust Fund on Violence against Women set up under the Untied Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

11. In response to the Platform for Action, the plan also focuses on the critical area "Women and armed conflict", with particular attention to the specific gender impact of armed conflict, including rape and its short- and long-term effects on women and girls. Efforts have been made to promote a gender-sensitive approach to conflict resolution and the management of conflict through capacity-building and training. Discussions on establishing an international criminal court, with specific attention to war crimes that affect women and girls, particularly rape, have moved forward.

12. In the critical area "Women and the economy", the strategic orientation/focus of the plan is on the promotion of a comprehensive strategy for equal opportunities for women in employment and for the development of women entrepreneurs by enhancing women's access to productive resources. United Nations system activities have therefore included increasing women's access to credit and to opportunities for entrepreneurship, and raising awareness of the importance of the economic empowerment of women and the impact of economic policies on women, including trade policies. Research has been intensified on the participation of women in manufacturing, and on the patterns, determinants and future trends for women's employment. Particular attention has been given to rural women's enterprises and employment opportunities.

13. The Platform for Action and in turn the plan both place new importance on the critical area "Women in power and decision-making". In this critical area, the United Nations system has focused on the importance of increasing the number of women in decision-making positions at all levels and in various sectors, strengthening the role of women parliamentarians, leadership and management training, and researching issues of women's empowerment and honouring significant women role models. Support has been given to women's organizations to empower women, particularly at the community level.

14. The Platform for Action calls for strengthening the capacity and catalytic role of national machineries for the advancement of women. It also calls for the overall collection and development of gender-disaggregated statistics and indicators. Activities carried out during the period under review in line with the plan have also focused on the development of gender-sensitive performance indicators, increased visibility and inclusion of gender issues in policies and programmes, and gender-sensitive development planning.

15. The strategic orientation /focus of the United Nations system in the critical area "Human rights of women" is to emphasize women's full and equal enjoyment of their rights. Activities have focused on educating women and adolescents about their rights; improving servicing and visibility for the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), including seminars for parliamentarians and policy makers on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and mainstreaming gender in the international treaty regime.

16. With respect to the critical area "Women and the media", the strategy of the United Nations system has focused on advocacy and training for gender-sensitive media coverage and access by women to new communication technologies to raise awareness, advocate for greater attention by the media to women's issues, and promote a positive, well-balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media. Women and the new electronic media garnered attention, but resources were still primarily directed at the traditional media.

17. The strategic orientation/focus of United Nations system action in the critical area "Women and the environment" emphasizes the importance of ensuring that women's contribution to environmental protection is recognized and assisted, and that gender concerns are reflected in policy-making and environmental decision-making. Activities ranged from the development of guidelines incorporating gender concerns and research on the impact of environmental degradation on women's livelihood to the development of training packages on women and environmental management.

18. Under the critical area "The girl child", the United Nations system emphasized efforts to eliminate gender-based disparities among girls. During the period under review, activities included development of databases on child mortality by sex, support for programmes addressing illiteracy among girls and advocacy for the rights of the girl child, including girls in rural areas, education for girls both formal and non-formal, girls in the workplace, and the elimination of harmful practices that inhibit girls' full development.

III. Institutional and financial arrangements and obstacles encountered in implementation

19. Respondents noted many advances in the areas of institutional development and finance along the lines indicated in the Beijing Platform for Action and the system-wide action plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001, but at the same time noted that many of the obstacles encountered in implementing the Platform and the activities indicated in the plan are associated with institutional and financial issues. Those obstacles, as well as positive developments and developments with respect to such cross-cutting issues as gender equality mainstreaming, are reported below.

A. Gender equality mainstreaming

20. A number of entities noted that mandates for mainstreaming gender, following the Fourth World Conference on Women and other recent United Nations global conferences, have been designed and endorsed by various intergovernmental bodies, such as the Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on Social Development and various governing bodies of specialized agencies, funds and programmes, and that that has been newly reflected in certain programme budgets. In July 1997, agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming, which addressed the entire United Nations system, were adopted by the Economic and Social Council, and the Secretary-General's reform proposals submitted to the General Assembly in 1997 call for gender mainstreaming in all policies and programmes.

21. Several entities have issued directives to staff to step up their efforts to use gender analysis in designing and assessing plans and projects. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator's Direct Line 11 on Gender Equality and the Advancement of Women, addressed to all resident representatives, lays out the commitment of UNDP to supporting gender equality and the advancement of women. A UNDP guidance note on gender mainstreaming, which has been sent to all country offices, spells out the commitment, competencies and accountability measures needed to make gender mainstreaming a reality. The World Bank has reviewed projects designed/developed using gender analysis to identify the best ways to ensure women's participation and women's access to project resources and services, and to improve women's educational attainment, health status and/or income levels, and is using that review as a baseline for further project development. The World Bank has also prepared six regional gender action plans. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) has published a comprehensive policy paper and action plan for putting a gender perspective into all of its policies, programmes and projects, entitled "Gendered Habitat".

22. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) instituted a consultative process to develop and finalize gender programmes of action for 1996-2000 in 24 divisions. The regular programmes and projects of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) are being revised to introduce gender analysis. The World Food Programme (WFP) has launched a set of commitments to women to be met by the year 2001, which have been translated by all its country offices and several headquarters units into specific action plans. UNAIDS has identified gender as one of its cross-cutting themes to be mainstreamed.

23. In revising guidelines for country programmes, UNICEF emphasizes gender as a cross-cutting theme, using a rights approach, with a view to influencing the situation analysis of children and women in country programme preparation and promoting the use of gender-sensitive indicators in setting goals and monitoring progress. UNICEF country programmes increasingly give attention to gender issues, as demonstrated in new country programmes submitted to its Executive Board. Out of 40 such programmes, 17 had a high gender profile and 13 fell into the medium category. At the organizational level, UNICEF has mainstreamed the gender perspective in programme guidelines of sectoral programmes, starting with water and environmental sanitation. A separate module for integrating gender concerns is being prepared and is to be ready by end-1997 to provide guidance and hands-on application in that sector.

24. UNFPA has been making special efforts to ensure that gender issues are mainstreamed into all of its programmes. Those efforts include the revision of all policy guidelines to include the gender perspective; formulation of a draft conceptual framework and indicators to monitor the extent to which gender considerations have been effectively integrated into all aspects of its country programmes; and an assessment of gender mainstreaming in 13 country programmes.

25. Some agencies that have reported on progress in efforts to mainstream gender note that although policies have been put in place on women and gender, policy implementation does not always receive consistent attention by senior management, and systems for monitoring the implementation of gender activities as part of larger programmes and projects are largely absent. In some cases, the guidelines developed to integrate gender into programmes and projects are not being fully applied at the operational level. UNDP notes that in a sample of 417 of its recent projects, gender is superficially added but rarely integrated into operating assumptions.

26. It has been reported by some entities that a perception that gender issues are synonymous with women's issues has resulted in a poor understanding of gender mainstreaming and its implications for programming. Lack of awareness and understanding of the role of women in various sectors also continues to be an obstacle. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) reports that traditional approaches creating separate women's activities and organizations have caused problems and conflicts in certain

areas. To address that problem, UNEP has adjusted its policies to ensure that a gender perspective is reflected in all policy design, and has developed gender-sensitivity criteria for inclusion in its design, approval and evaluation manual. At ECLAC, efforts are being made to identify gender variables that will benefit growth and efficiency as well as allow the analysis of differential impact of public policies on men and women.

27. Work under way by the United Nations Development Group to define a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) offers opportunities to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment goals are integrated into the United Nations country team framework for development cooperation at the country level. Further efforts are clearly needed in that regard, however, particularly in the application of the framework at the country level to ensure that gender issues figure prominently.

28. With respect to methodologies for gender analysis, a fundamental obstacle that has been encountered is a lack of agreed indicators for assessing prevalence and monitoring actions, for example on the empowerment of women and girls, the enforcement of rights or the use of protection measures in projects on violence against women. UNICEF has found that to be the case when attempting to assess and monitor the implementation of State party obligations at the national and subnational levels under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

29. Some entities have reported having mechanisms for defining and enforcing responsibility and accountability for mainstreaming gender. At FAO, an interdepartmental committee on women in development was established to function as the highest-level coordinating body on mainstreaming gender. A gender issues board advises the Executive Director of UNEP on the implementation of gender policies. At the World Bank, gender is one of the criteria applied in rating projects approved for funding. Projects are classified for their gender content on a scale of zero to two: 0 for projects which have no gender content; 1 for those with gender analysis only but no specific components to address gender issues, and 2 for those which show evidence of gender analysis and components addressed to gender disparities. That rating system is currently under revision to improve its effectiveness. Work is under way to refine performance indicators, and an external gender consultative group of gender specialists and representatives from women's organizations has been established. The WFP Gender Task Force, chaired by the WFP Deputy Executive Director, operates at a senior management level in the field and at headquarters. Funding proposals for WFP development and relief operations specify how women will be given a substantial voice in local decision-making committees on administration of food aid management, and also in bodies which administer the assets/benefits created. In contractual agreements with partners, WFP requires that attention be given to women's position in the management of food distribution and provides for women and children at risk to receive appropriate and adequate food.

30. Within the United Nations Secretariat, the Secretary-General has personally asked heads of United Nations entities to report on their efforts to mainstream gender. The Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women has been asked to assist in developing modalities for introducing gender analysis and gender balance into programmes and staffing policies. A number of discussions have already taken place in that regard, and responses to the Secretary-General's request have been received from the International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/WTO), UNFPA, the Department of Political Affairs, the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the World Intellectual Property Organization, UNRISD, the World Bank, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNEP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

31. As part of the overall inter-agency concern that a strategic framework for dealing with countries in crisis be developed for greater coordination and consistency, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women was requested to chair an ad hoc inter-agency task force meeting on gender in Afghanistan. She also headed an inter-agency gender mission to Afghanistan, which assessed the gender situation and prepared a set of practical field-oriented guidelines with related indicators by which agencies could consistently apply the agreed upon principle-centred approach for programmes and projects, and could measure their progress towards achieving that objective. ECLAC organized meetings of mid-level and senior-level managers to create a commitment to institutionalizing a gender approach and going beyond a strictly women-component approach.

B. Gender analysis training

32. Many United Nations entities continue to train staff in the use of gender analysis and several have stepped up their efforts. Staff of the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat have participated in training for mainstreaming gender in various sectors.

UNFPA has conducted gender training for headquarters and field staff and national counterparts, and has supported the production of gender and population training manuals in three pilot countries, which will lead to the formulation of a prototype manual that may be adapted for use in other countries. With a view to promoting the incorporation of a gender dimension into the UNDAF exercise, two UNIFEM regional programme advisers have been trained as part of the global support team that is facilitating the UNDAF process in the first 19 pilot countries. ECLAC has planned workshops for technical staff and project experts to identify concrete ways to use gender analysis.

33. FAO has expanded the use of its international training package on gender analysis and forestry. The Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis Programme (SEAGA), which was developed by FAO with multilateral and bilateral collaboration, has contributed to strengthening socio-economic and gender analysis capacities at the national and local levels. Trainers have been taught to use SEAGA methodologies and tools. UNDP has trained gender focal points in its country offices, along with key government and non-governmental organization staff. UNDP has also begun to develop a training module on the gender consequences of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The ILO has conducted 20 gender training workshops in the region and three at headquarters for ILO staff and representatives of ILO constituents. New training material has been developed and the ILO briefing kit has been updated, while more resources have been allocated to gender training for ILO staff. WFP has organized four gender workshops in the regions and four at headquarters, drawing on a training module based on the first regional workshop on experience with female leadership in the southern Sudan and FAO gender analysis tools. National gender workshops were organized with counterparts and followed by preparation of gender action plans.

34. Drawing on existing training manuals, ECA has prepared a manual on gender mainstreaming to familiarize programme managers with gender concepts and gender terminology, and to assist them and their staff in mainstreaming gender in their programmes. The first of a series of gender mainstreaming training workshops was held for the African Centre for Women, cabinet staff and the gender focal points from subregional development centres and the divisions. Training for the rest of the ECA staff is planned for 1998. A reference centre, providing regularly updated information on the status of African women in the different critical areas of concern, will also be established. Habitat has developed a gender awareness building kit for in-house training. UNICEF has supported the development of training modules and local adaptations of the UNICEF gender training package for gender training of teachers, community-based volunteers, functionaries of municipalities, women leaders and non-governmental organizations.

C. Gender focal points

35. At the time of the Fourth World Conference on Women, a number of United Nations entities had focal points on women/gender programming, but few were located in the offices of executive heads or had easy access to central policy-making. Since the Conference, several entities have reduced gender focal points as part of downsizing. Others, like the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, have established new focal point arrangements. The Office has created a gender and human rights of women team with a view to developing an Office-wide structured approach to gender and human rights of women and to promoting systematic gender mainstreaming in all its activities. ECA has appointed gender focal points in all its subregional development centres. At ECA headquarters, gender focal points have been appointed at the level of divisions to assist in mainstreaming gender. Another Professional post has been added to the ILO Office of the Special Adviser on Women Workers' Questions at ILO headquarters.

36. Several entities have noted that a majority of their regional and country offices do not have full-time gender focal points, thus the responsibility for gender issues has been given to staff members with responsibilities for other programme areas who may not necessarily have the requisite expertise and commitment to gender. Others have established gender units/advisers in their regional and/or country offices. UNDP has established on a pilot basis, starting in Africa, national gender-in-development advisory posts. Within the context of a joint UNDP, UNIFEM and UNV project, UNV has mobilized resources for the funding of 20 UNV gender-in-development specialists to be assigned to UNDP country offices; 5 of those specialists are funded by the UNV Special Voluntary Fund. The ILO has created two additional posts of senior specialists on women and gender questions at the regional level, bringing the number of such posts to six. WFP has established a network of gender focal points at the country office, regional and headquarters levels. The creation of gender focal points has been noted by others to be essential for programming at the country and regional levels. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has mentioned that a serious constraint is the lack of consideration and incorporation of gender issues within its field operations,

mostly as a result of lack of training of monitors and qualified staff.

37. Where focal points serve on a part-time basis, it has been emphasized that their work on gender issues should be recognized and recorded in performance appraisals, and that given their importance in advocating and assisting in achieving gender mainstreaming in organizations, a systematic review of the role of focal points on gender and women's advancement is needed.

D. Mobilization and allocation of financial resources

38. Some entities, such as UNICEF, the Division for the Advancement of Women,, World Bank, UNIFEM and UNIDO, have reported on commitments made to increase spending on gender responsive activities. UNDP has confirmed its target of 10 per cent of global programme resources for gender mainstreaming and the advancement of women, along with commitments from various subprogrammes and in thematic areas, so that at least 20 per cent of its global budget will be dispersed in promoting the advancement of women. Each UNDP regional bureau and country office has agreed to allocate 20 per cent of its resources to the advancement of women. WFP has gone a long way towards meeting its target of devoting 60 per cent of country programme resources to women and girls in countries where gender statistics demonstrate a 25 per cent disadvantage of women as compared with men. A budget allocation of $1 million was made in 1997 by WFP to finance the gender action plans at the country and headquarters levels and, *inter alia*, to mainstream gender concerns in overall WFP policy, strategies, programming, monitoring and evaluation and training.

39. At the same time, it has been reported that a major obstacle to implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the system-wide medium-term plan is inadequate financial resources. This has been variously attributed to lack of or insufficient funds available to the United Nations agency itself, or from government agencies involved; reduced budgets due to the United Nations financial crisis; and lack of a smooth flow of donor funds and difficulties in obtaining funds on a timely basis. Lack of funds for follow-up and organization of further programmes has also been noted. Moreover, there is often no donor support for capacity-building for gender mainstreaming, i.e., for core budgets for women's groups and others who could implement gender-responsive projects. UNIFEM has found that there is high donor support for projects by women's groups from the South, but not for infrastructure and administration. Budget needs, therefore, make capacity-building and project work difficult to sustain. In some cases, the lack of resources has meant the delay and/or cancellation of certain projects. The ILO has noted that potential donors prefer to finance components of projects rather than the whole package. WHO has observed that there is a lack of adequate funding to attract suitable partners.

40. On the positive side, ESCAP has reported that it has a technical cooperation among developing countries trust fund which has helped finance activities on women and development and the private sector has also co-sponsored activities. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat has mobilized resources from the African Development Bank, two private corporations and non-governmental organizations. The Division for the Advancement of Women has received government contributions to its trust fund to support panellists and non-governmental organizations participation in the work of the Commission on the Status of Women, and to expand participation in expert group meetings, and to convene a gender mainstreaming workshop. ESCWA has used a collaborative mechanism with the League of Arab States and the Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research to mobilize resources. To supplement its regular budget, a significant portion of the work programme of the ECA African Centre for Women is being implemented with funds contributed by bilateral and multilateral donors.

41. The collection of information on expenditures for gender-responsive programmes continues to be a major problem for the United Nations system. From the information received to date, it is apparent that the difficulties of collecting and collating data on expenditures for activities specific to women, as well as on activities that integrate gender, remain unchanged. Although awareness of the need to do so has increased, steps to facilitate the identification of expenditures that contribute to the advancement of women are still needed. UNDP has reported a lack of consistency in arriving at and classifying allocations, highlighting the imprecision of efforts to quantify and track specific budget allocations to gender mainstreaming. The estimation of expenditures on specific target groups continues to be complicated. The necessary methodology remains to be developed in relation to both targeted and mainstream activities. Other agencies have found that increasing decentralization of programming makes it more difficult to track overall expenditures.

E. Human resources

42. Renewed efforts to achieve gender balance in staffing have been made but are often thwarted by reform and cuts in resources. In 1997, high-level UNDP appointments of women to senior management positions included the posts of Director of the Office of Human Resources, Director of Finance, Director of Operations and Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa. In the United Nations Secretariat, the percentage of women in the Professional category subject to geographical distribution increased from 34 per cent in 1995 to 36.6 per cent in 1997. Among the 28 departments and offices with over 20 staff reviewed, three have achieved or surpassed the goal of 50 per cent women overall in posts subject to geographical distribution: the Office of Human Resources Management, the Department of Administration and Management and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

43. At WFP, the number of female staff has increased through proactive recruitment and promotion and a better retention rate. At the P-5 level and above, 18.9 per cent of staff were women in 1996, compared with 9.2 per cent in 1992. Overall recruitment of female staff increased from 12 per cent during 1994 to 39 per cent during 1996. As of December 1996, female women are represented at the D-1(18.6 per cent), D-2(14.3 per cent), and ASG/USG(33 per cent) levels.

44. UNDCP has noted that there is little national technical expertise available in some countries to address the special needs of women drug abusers. Few women officers work in law enforcement and supply reduction areas of drug control. ILO contends that human capacity is seldom sufficient to be able to respond to the needs in the field. Moreover, the relatively small number of women working in the field severely limits experience-sharing activities.

F. Political and cultural obstacles

45. Political and cultural obstacles have been encountered at the national level, including political instability, unpreparedness of concerned governmental authorities, fragile and inflexible education systems, lack of political commitment and national will, resistance from those in power, and inadequate political commitment for the allocation of resources, all of which have led to delays and non-implementation of some projects. Political unrest affects the situation of women and the role of non-governmental organizations. One of the obstacles confronting projects for women in armed conflict is the extreme delicacy of the issues being addressed, such as rape, violence and genocide. In particular, it has been noted that there is often insufficient appreciation of the potential role of women in resolving issues leading to armed conflict.

46. UNIFEM sees the identification of key leverage points in governmental processes as an important prerequisite for effective gender mainstreaming. Most projects have to take into account cultural sensitivities and religious and traditional beliefs, some of which are used to create political obstacles. Language barriers for grass-roots women impede some projects. A few agencies have noted a lack of materials in all six official languages and of translators to conduct training programmes, due to insufficient funds. Sociocultural attitudes and resistance to women's social participation are described as obstacles. One entity has noted that "patriarchal society" is a barrier to successful project implementation in certain regions.

G. Delays in project implementation

47. Complicated and prolonged procedures for project approval and the long time-frame required for some projects have been reported as obstacles. Prolonged and lengthy negotiations with counterparts have caused delays in the start of some projects. The Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat, for instance, has found that staffing vacancies have delayed the completion of several projects. In some cases, changes in counterpart staff in the field have caused delays, while in others effectiveness has been curtailed because local women have so many responsibilities that it is difficult for them to take on new tasks.

H. Coordination

48. The coordination of system-wide efforts to implement the Beijing Platform for Action has been enhanced during the period under review by the establishment of the ACC Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality (IACWGE), chaired by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and supported by the Division for the Advancement of Women. In September 1997, the Division organized a workshop on gender mainstreaming for members of IACWGE and the OECD Development Assistance Committee/Women in Development Group of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD DAC/WID). Over 60 participants attended the meeting, exchanged experiences on gender mainstreaming and developed important alliances

for the coordination of future work. IACWGE, which normally meets once a year, initiated efforts at its 1997 meeting, on the development of gender-sensitive indicators; the identification of effective methods for budgeting and accountability for women's equality; the collection of best practices for use at the community level to ensure coordinated gender mainstreaming; and the drafting of a mission statement for the ACC on gender mainstreaming. Despite limitations on the number of formal IACWGE meetings, a number of informal meetings were held, whenever the opportunity arose, at Istanbul and Geneva and in New York to exchange views and update members. In general, over the period under review, several entities have perceived that there is more extensive direct or indirect collaboration among the United Nations agencies, which has been attributed to the Fourth World Conference on Women, IACWGE and a greater recognition that agencies, by pooling knowledge, expertise and resources, can be more effective. Examples of such collaboration include the joint UNFPA/WHO/UNICEF statement on female genital mutilation; the work on core indicators; joint wall charts on particular aspects of women's issues; the Internet site, WomenWatch; and numerous instances of project co-financing, as well as joint development of gender training materials. There has also been an increase in collaborating and co-financing of technical meetings and seminars in a number of sectors.

49. Efforts have been made by the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division of the United Nations Secretariat to collaborate with and obtain requisite inputs from and respective programme perspectives of United Nations entities in connection with the preparation of the draft model strategies and practical measures on the elimination of violence against women, which propose action of a multidisciplinary nature. Inter-agency coordination to support an advocacy campaign on eradicating violence against women in Latin America has been initiated by UNIFEM, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations.

50. The regional commissions have undertaken various coordinating efforts. ESCAP was the Convener of the Regional Inter-Agency Committee for Asia and the Pacific for follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Africa Regional Coordinating Committee on the Integration of Women in Development, the name of which has been changed to African Committee on Women in Development, has been revitalized to increase its impact. In 1997, its terms of reference were revised to focus more on its comparative advantage of monitoring the implementation of the African and Global Platforms for Action at the regional and subregional levels. To enhance its capacity to play that role, its composition was also broadened to include such actors as members of non-governmental organizations and other members of civil society, as well as representatives of research, subregional and regional institutions. An ad hoc expert group meeting on gender networking was convened, at which strategies for networking based on the experience of the participants and on the role of the African Committee on Women in Development in the networking process among actors in different sectors were formulated in the areas of women's economic empowerment, women's human rights and women in decision-making. Other forms of coordination of the implementation process in Africa have included attending coordination and planning meetings of non-governmental organizations at the regional and subregional levels to share information and provide guidance, together with such organizations as the East African Subregional Support Initiatives, the African Women Development and Communication Network, and the Pan African Conference on Peace. There has been continued collaboration with the Organization of African Unity and the specialized agencies. An inter-agency task force on gender has been set up in Amman, with ESCWA and UNIFEM as Conveners. The task force has provided technical and financial support to the Arab Conference to formulate a unified programme of action and mechanism to follow up the Fourth World Conference on Women.

51. At the field level, progress has been made under the leadership of the resident coordinators in inter-agency coordination to follow up the Fourth World Conference on Women and other global conferences. However, work under way to define the UNDAF has yet fully to integrate women's equality as a key objective, and gender analysis needs to be more systematically applied during the project formulation stage at the country level. In a number of countries, inter-agency thematic groups on gender have been convened by UNIFEM regional programme advisers to coordinate follow-up to the Conference and joint activities to mainstream gender and support women's empowerment strategies. In Senegal, for instance, UNIFEM convened an inter-agency thematic group, involving United Nations agencies, bilateral donors and non-governmental organizations, to coordinate support to the government plan on implementation of the Platform for Action. UNFPA has emphasized the need for coordinated action with its United Nations system partners, bilateral donors, government ministries and the civil society, including the academic community, non-governmental organizations and the private sector at all appropriate levels, national, regional and international.

IV. Recommendations for further action

52. Based on the responses received and taking into account the evidence of increased cooperation among entities in order to implement the Beijing Platform for Action, a number of recommendations are set out below for further improving coordination by the United Nations system in implementing the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001 in the second half of the plan's term. The recommendations also reflect the conclusions of the workshop on gender mainstreaming held at Geneva in September 1997 with the participation of members of IACWGE and OECD DAC/WID, as well as the inter-agency workshop on follow-up to global conferences held at Turin in December 1997, which made proposals for strengthening United Nations country team capacity to support integrated and coordinated follow-up to United Nations world conferences. The recommendations further build on agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming of the Economic and Social Council, which, a year after the Council approved the system-wide medium-term plan, proposed steps for mainstreaming gender analysis and for advancing the status of women in the work of the United Nations system as a whole. The recommendations for action by the United Nations system primarily suggest action that would further a coordinated and cohesive approach to the work of the United Nations system in relation to the system-wide medium-term plan and the Platform for Action, namely:

(a) Support the coordinated collection, packaging and dissemination of social and economic data disaggregated by sex, as well as gender-sensitive studies, guidelines and checklists, and develop and test women's empowerment indicators;

(b) Where not already in place, elaborate action plans or strategies for gender mainstreaming that clearly describe goals, tasks and accountability for gender mainstreaming at all levels;

(c) Encourage IACWGE to continue its efforts to propose a workable methodology for quantifying and tracking budget allocations made towards achieving gender equality, based on the experience of various organizations, including in reviewing progress in the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan;

(d) Identify, on a system-wide basis, the competencies and capacities required for gender mainstreaming, and propose strategies for closing gaps through investment in training, coaching and mentoring to enable staff to work with gender analysis tools;

(e) Ensure that staffing policies throughout the United Nations system, whether recruiting or promoting women or men, fully reflect the need for gender competence and gender equality;

(f) Conduct a comparative analysis of the role of gender specialists, focal points and/or gender units in efforts to bring about change and in increasing effectiveness in programming for gender equality as a basis for preparing guidelines on gender focal points;

(g) Make full use, as appropriate, of available expertise, including the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender and Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM and INSTRAW, for the design, monitoring and evaluation of gender responsive policies and programmes;

(h) Employ inter-agency coordination mechanisms and bodies within the United Nations, such as the executive committees set up by the Secretary-General in the framework of the reform process and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) bodies, including the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions and the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development, to promote an increasingly coordinated overall approach to gender mainstreaming;

(i) Continue to improve inter-agency coordination for gender mainstreaming and advancement of women at the field level, through the IACWGE, UNDG and UNDAF processes and products, in sectoral and cross-sectoral areas, including for rural women;

(j) Strengthen the exchange of experience and cooperation on gender issues at the regional level, in particular through the regional commissions and their meetings of regional representatives of members of ACC;

(k) Identify and disseminate positive examples and practical lessons learned with respect to gender mainstreaming;

(l) Provide assistance to countries in building gender competencies cross-sectorally, and in establishing systems of accountability for gender mainstreaming;

(m) Develop principles and guidelines for strengthening cooperation with non-governmental organizations active on gender issues, both in advocacy and project implementation.

Notes

[1] The Committee for Programme and Coordination, when it considered the plan, raised a question about activities for rural women. For the present review, rural women are reported to be a major target group of United Nations activities, and although much of the work with respect to rural women has been reported under "Women and poverty", activities have also been reported under other critical areas, including "Women and the economy" and "Women and education".

Annex

Highlights of information on implementation in the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action, as supplied by responding United Nations entities

1. Activities being undertaken by entities that contributed to the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001, and by other entities that have since reported on their related activities, are set out below. In presenting the information, two of the headings employed by the Plan, "Information collection and database development" and "Research and analysis", have been combined for the sake of brevity. The third and fourth headings, "Operational activities, including advisory services, technical assistance and training" and "Public information and outreach", have been retained in the present report, except in chapter X, "Women and the media", in which they have been combined. Due to page limitations, it has been necessary to provide only the highlights of the wealth of information provided by responding entities, with emphasis on the nature of the activities undertaken and in most cases without naming the specific countries where activities were carried out. The detailed responses are available on request from the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat.

I. Women and poverty

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

2. During the period under review, ILO developed a database on the socio-economic characteristics of home workers; conducted in-depth case studies; and completed a synthesis of policy guidelines for integrating a gender perspective in social fund programmes. UNDP, in collaboration with UNRISD, embarked on comparative research on indicators of poverty and well-being sensitive to gender differences and strategies to combat poverty that promote gender equality. The research explored the gender implications of labour intensive growth strategies and the impact of redistributive policies on gender well-being, and included a gender analysis of selective anti-poverty programmes, such as public works, microcredit, and women and land rights. UNFPA supported strengthening national capacities to study the relationship between gender, population and poverty and to formulate and manage projects in this area. A study on food, population and women was prepared.

3. The Division for the Advancement of Women contributed gender-specific inputs to the Economic and Social Council report on poverty, and prepared a policy report on rural women. ESCAP completed studies on female workers in the informal sector, and formulated policy recommendations on improving the status of women living under conditions of poverty. Research on gender indicators in poverty profiles was presented by the United Nations Statistic Division at an ECLAC seminar on poverty and statistics in 1997. ECLAC concluded research on the relationship between sustainable development, poverty and gender. ECA is conducting a survey in six countries on access by rural and urban women to resources, and on mechanisms for management and distribution of those resources, especially land and technology. ESCWA has made progress in developing a gender disaggregated database covering social issues, convened an expert group meeting that addressed, *inter alia*, women and poverty, and carried out exploratory studies in that area.

Operational activities

4. FAO advised member States on increasing rural women's access to productive resources and services, and completed gender-sensitive training materials on improving extension work with rural women based on country case studies. UNIDO developed and disseminated a conceptual multi-purpose "platform" (agro-processing unit), which was managed by women's groups assisting village communities in establishing an integrated support system for rural women, consisting of literacy and numeracy training, technical training, credit, repair and maintenance schemes. IFAD implemented gender projects on nutrition, land issues, credit and food security. UNIFEM helped to establish women's enterprises, and funded credit, investment and income-generating activities for women, and for strengthening entrepreneurial skills. It also sought to apply science and technology to meet the needs of women living in poverty. UNDP, with the assistance of the Japanese Fund for Women in Development, initiated women's economic empowerment programmes, including access to credit. UNV built

partnerships with women's grass-roots organizations supporting community-based initiatives and income-generating activities, undertook literacy programmes in rural areas and projects to improve the living conditions of disadvantaged women and youth, and established a number of women's handicraft industries, including the marketing of handicraft production. WFP India joined other United Nations bodies, such as ILO, UNIFEM and UNDP, in organizing regional workshops for non-governmental organizations, government banks and credit agencies on best practices regarding microcredit for women.

5. ILO developed a programme of capacity-building for employment promotion, gender equality and poverty eradication, including a modular training package for policy makers and practitioners. It implemented training programmes on employment promotion, and appraised the gender dimension of social fund programmes in Latin America and Africa. A workshop on the gender dimensions of social programmes was organized, and home workers' organizations are being established. A series of advisory missions was undertaken to formulate strategies for promoting women's employment in the context of economic reform and restructuring. A participatory poverty alleviation pilot project aimed at rural women's employment is under way in Africa.

6. UNEP completed a project on training in the construction and use of fuel-saving stoves to assist women living in impoverished conditions in Africa. The Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries of the United Nations Secretariat funded training on accessing credit and supported African follow-up to the Microcredit Summit. UNDP supported the Microcredit Summit and the meet-the-challenge sessions on the use of microcredit as a tool for the economic empowerment of women, and launched MICROSTART, a pilot programme in 25 countries to strengthen micro-finance institutions in their operations, at least 40 per cent of whose total borrowers are women.

7. UNESCO collaborated with other United Nations agencies and local non-governmental organizations and Governments in nine highly populated countries, illustrating how community development programmes tailored to meet the specific needs of women can contribute to combating poverty and marginalization and improving the quality of life for rural women. UNHCR, in its efforts to integrate refugee/returnee women in post-conflict reconstruction and development, has introduced microcredit schemes/small grants and skill training for microenterprise development. Shelter and other forms of basic needs and material assistance were also provided to alleviate poverty.

8. Women-specific and mainstream ITC trade development projects in Africa and Asia focused on developing group-level entrepreneurship for poor rural women, assisting small businesses in export development, and capacity-building of national mainstream and women's institutions to undertake export promotion activities and deliver trade support services.

9. The Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and the Denial of Human Rights, with the assistance of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights , organized a seminar that reinforced the view that women are disproportionately represented among those living in extreme poverty. The Special Rapporteur on Income Distribution examined the question of income distribution and gender discrimination, noting that income distribution is commonly measured by household and thus conceals the situation of discrimination often encountered by women.

10. UNFPA provided reproductive health education and services to poor, young and adult women living in rural and in urban areas, with the goal of reducing poverty, improving poor people's well-being and health, and enhancing their status. Microcredit activities that aim to enhance women's economic status are very often integrated into the regular reproductive health/family planning projects. UNFPA participated in the Microcredit Summit, and launched a global campaign to reach the world's poorest women. An internal guidance note on population and poverty alleviation suggested effective interventions to help alleviate poverty through its three thematic areas of reproductive health, population, and development strategies and advocacy.

11. ECLAC offered substantive servicing of a regional seminar, an ad hoc committee and a subregional ministerial conference on the issue of poverty and human settlements, reproductive health and the eradication of poverty; gave technical assistance to a number of Caribbean Governments on sustainable human development and the eradication of poverty, and created a poverty matrix. ESCWA, with UNV and the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations, have completed two community development projects focused on integrating rural women in development.

Public information and outreach

12. The Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat, through its information centres at the country level, sponsored seminars, workshops, panel discussions and lectures, and distributed printed materials on women and poverty to the media, Governments and the

public. FAO commemorated World Rural Women's Day, and produced videos on rural women and food security and on women farmers. UNV produced a video entitled "Portraits of Lao women", featuring poor women. ESCAP promoted a better understanding of the role of science and technology in alleviating poverty, including that of poor women. ILO incorporated public outreach in many of its activities. During the World Food Summit, FAO hosted special seminars on gender issues, and published a number of reports on gender. The themes for International Women's Day in 1996 and 1997 were "Empowering women, feeding humanity" and "Mainstreaming rural women as agents of food security". UNESCO participated and financially supported the creation of a women's information centre, whose main purpose is the dissemination of information on the rights of women. To mark International Women's Day 1997, ECA, as part of an inter-agency and donor community group at Addis Ababa, organized a week-long programme on the topic "Feminization of poverty". UNAIDS prepared an advocacy paper on the feminization of poverty related to AIDS in India.

II. Education and training of women

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

13. Sex-disaggregated statistics related to education continued to be supplied periodically to the United Nations Statistics Division. The Division for the Advancement of Women, in collaboration with ILO, held an expert group meeting on vocational training and lifelong learning of women, and the results were made available to the Commission on the Status of Women in 1997. Habitat published *Women Constructing Their Lives*, which was based on case studies and contained an evaluation and concrete proposals for women's participation in the non-traditional (for women) field of construction. UNESCO convened an international conference on adult education, on the theme "Adult learning: a key for the twenty-first century", at which the empowerment of women through adult education was discussed, and it was recommended that at least six per cent of member States' gross national product be allocated to education, with an equitable share set aside for adult learning. UNAIDS has supported sexuality and HIV/AIDS education, as well as a study which showed that sexuality education delays the onset of sexual activity.

14. ECLAC prepared documentation on educational policies for women on the integration of women into the economic and social development of Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as a document on female human resources development. It also undertook field research on the presence of sex stereotypes in the formal education of young children. The Joint ECLAC/UNIDO Industrial and Technological Development Unit prepared a proposal on how to include gender-related topics in projects to improve the quality, efficiency and relevance of technical and professional training.

Operational activities

15. Besides promoting the right of women and girls to education as a fundamental human right and a key to development, UNESCO focused on the education of women and girls within the context of rural communities. A comprehensive effort was made to link formal and non-formal educational activities and to tailor them to the needs and aspirations of the community. In cooperation with the Arab Gulf Fund for United Nations Development and local women non-governmental organizations, UNESCO supported rural community centres as teaching/learning centres for women and girls in order to use more effectively different methods of non-formal education for women. UNESCO education projects for women and girls in Africa to implement paragraph 87 of the Beijing Platform for Action included training for trainers of teachers, social workers and non-formal educators on how to help girls cope with social and economic changes in their societies.

16. UNICEF undertook activities in support of girls' education, including bilingual education programmes serving 50,000 girls and mothers in one country. Enrolment of girls in community schools increased in another country from 30 per cent to 70 per cent by reducing the distance needed for girls to travel to school, particularly in rural areas, encouraging the return by pregnant girls to school after the birth of a baby. Other successful training programmes were mounted, including teacher training. The number of girls enrolled in formal school systems in many developing countries has significantly increased as a result of UNICEF activities. The WHO Global Commission on Women's Health is preparing a round table on health and education in collaboration with UNESCO, with a focus on girls' education and health. An ESCAP women's literacy project resulted in a handbook that is widely used, and skill gaps were identified to promote the participation of women in industrial and technological development.

17. ILO conducted training activities for women in rural and marginal urban areas to improve opportunities for

women in employment and production. UNDP undertook numerous projects to promote women's literacy, education for sustainable livelihoods and multisectoral approaches to basic learning. UNDP supported projects on gender-sensitive education and girls' and women's education (UNDP also addressed trainers in formal and non-formal social work); training on guidance and counselling services; and enhancing the access of girls to science, technical and vocational education and awareness of the relationship between science, technology, health, environment and society. It reinforced research on gender issues, and improved the access of women to scientific and technological education, training and careers. WFP approved around $70 million in food aid support to six education projects, of which 50 per cent was committed to girls and women, and budgets were adjusted to support girls' education in all extension projects. WFP operational guidelines on food aid support to the education sector included guidance on advocacy and investments to reduce gender gaps at the government, schools and community levels in design and through monitoring of food aid support. UNHCR has supported adult literacy and numeracy classes for refugees, and together with WFP has devised incentives to promote enrolment and retention of girls in schools, and to delay early marriage and childbearing.

18. UNFPA provided support for information, education and communication activities on reproductive health and gender equality within the formal and informal educational system by using traditional and mass media, encompassing revision of curricula to incorporate concepts of family life education and population education, gender equality and mutual respect, tolerance and respect for human rights. It assisted advocacy activities to ensure primary and secondary education for girls, and contributed to strengthening government and non-governmental organizations' capacity to teach young and adult women their rights to enable them to take care of their sexual and reproductive health. It helped to sensitize men about women's sexual and reproductive rights, and their paramount responsibility in promoting gender equality, eliminating violence against women and girls, and sharing responsibilities in public and private life.

Public outreach and information dissemination

19. A major focus of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Commission on the Status of Women in 1997 was its historic role in initiating decisions that promoted the advancement of women towards the goal of equality in all areas, particularly in decision-making in the secretariats of the United Nations and in Member States. As part of the commemoration, the Secretary-General honoured the former secretaries-general of the four world conferences on women, former chairpersons of the Commission and other prominent women who played a major part in the history of United Nations efforts for the advancement of women and who as role models had a positive impact on improving the status of women worldwide. Activities of the Department of Public Information included raising awareness of the need for education and training for women and girls and awareness-raising about the Beijing Platform for Action and the 12 critical areas of concern. UNICEF supported advocacy for girls' education throughout North Africa and the Middle East through a group of influential female educators, and initiated a global girls' education communication strategy. WFP, in collaboration with UNESCO, made a presentation entitled "WFP food aid in support of education of women and girls in Africa: past experiences and future action" at an African conference on the empowerment of women through functional literacy of the girl child. Increased awareness has also been created by UNIDO among project analysts, government departments and private-sector entities about the special needs and interests of women, which require attention in planning and implementing industrial development projects.

III. Women and health

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

20. The United Nations Statistics Division developed 10 indicators on reproductive health. WHO continued to collect information and develop databases on women and substance abuse, maternal mortality and morbidity, anaemia, unsafe abortion, sexual abuse and rape, and female genital mutilation, as well as other forms of violence against women and their health consequences. UNICEF recently updated information on iron/folate supplement use by pregnant women in developing countries. The Population Division undertook several analytical studies that dealt with various aspects of reproductive rights and reproductive health. WHO is undertaking research on the prevalence of violence against women in families and its health implications, and research projects on the impact of tropical diseases on women. WHO involved women's groups in its reproductive health research, producing a technical paper on gender and health and a

manual for health-care workers in the area of substance abuse.

21. As lead agency for the Task Force on Basic Social Services for All working group on reproductive health, WHO forged consensus around a short list of reproductive health indicators for global monitoring, to be complemented by guidelines on the generation and interpretation of the indicators. To strengthen national capacities for information analysis, WHO is field-testing a guideline on the process of selecting reproductive health indicators for use at the district level. To promote increased understanding of measurement issues in relation to maternal mortality, WHO and UNICEF jointly produced guidance notes on methodology for potential users of maternal mortality data. WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA issued guidelines on process indicators for monitoring access to essential obstetric care. WHO continued to maintain its extensive databases on women's reproductive health, and has issued revised estimates of maternal mortality, coverage of maternity care, and incidence of and mortality from unsafe abortion. A wall chart on aspects of maternal health care around the world was produced with World Bank support.

22. UNHCR has undertaken comprehensive programmes on reproductive health for refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda, and inter-agency efforts have yielded a field manual on reproductive health for refugee women and an emergency reproductive health kit. UNEP developed tools to assist decision makers in considering environmental health issues, including case studies, methodologies and a teaching textbook on environmental health impact assessment. ILO updated and revised maternal health recommendations and standards, which are expected to be widely ratifiable. UNDCP encouraged research on the subject of gender implications of drug abuse by establishing an award for outstanding work. FAO undertook a study on the effects of HIV/AIDS on agricultural production systems and rural livelihoods in West Africa. ECLAC completed a study on women's health in Latin America and the Caribbean, and included a request for statistics disaggregated by sex in a project on reforms of the financing of the region's national health systems.

Operational activities

23. One of UNFPA's primary programme priorities is to help ensure universal access to reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health, to all couples and individuals. Approximately 50 per cent of UNFPA programme expenditures/allocations were devoted to reproductive health activities. UNFPA worked with Governments and non-governmental organizations to provide, *inter alia*, reproductive health information, counselling and services for women and men as well as for adolescents and youth; training for medical and paramedical staff, midwives, traditional birth attendants and community agents; contraceptives supplies and medical equipment; and support for the construction and renovation of medical facilities. Substantial support was provided for the Safe Motherhood Initiative and for the eradication of harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation; sex selection; female foeticide and infanticide. UNAIDS has advocated for attention to be paid to the gender dimension of the HIV epidemic, as well as for female-controlled methods for the prevention of HIV. Globally, UNFPA assistance has resulted in reducing maternal and child mortality and morbidity. UNFPA provides support for national HIV/AIDS prevention programmes in line with national HIV/AIDS policies.

24. UNICEF convened training workshops and meetings to address problems associated with maternal mortality. In cooperation with other agencies, such as UNFPA, safe motherhood programmes at the country level were strengthened. The Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat provided technical advice and assistance to country projects supported by UNFPA dealing with reproductive health issues. In several countries, UNDP facilitated pilot programmes on reducing the economic impact of AIDS. UNIFEM provided technical advisory services. UNV assisted in setting up a microcredit fund in one country aimed at reducing maternal and infant mortality rates by improving socio-economic conditions, and did health-care training, including providing information about sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and HIV/AIDS. Volunteer activities focused on the inclusion of rural women through participatory approaches and techniques.

25. WHO continued to support national authorities and multilateral and bilateral partners in the development, implementation and evaluation of reproductive health programmes. In its normative role, WHO defined essential elements of maternal health care, including antenatal care, post-partum care and care in normal delivery. Essential practice guides for the care of women during pregnancy and childbirth were being developed. Support to countries for the use of syndromic approach for the management of sexually transmitted infections was being strengthened. To support clinical interventions, WHO was developing related managerial guidelines in sexual and reproductive health that cover needs assessment, training, supervision, logistics, monitoring and evaluation.

26. UNESCO developed a special programme for preventive education and communication designed for societies in which men traditionally have a dominant role and women therefore have little control over their sexual behaviour and reproductive function. Workshops for grass-roots level women's organizations to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS were designed to equip illiterate and neo-literate women with the knowledge and skills to protect themselves and their families from the epidemic. UNESCO was implementing, jointly with WHO/Global Programme on Aids, pilot projects in education for the prevention of AIDS and integrating AIDS education into population education projects. The Population Division undertook two country missions to provide technical advice and assistance in dealing with reproductive health issues, as well as one mission to evaluate the demographic impact of family planning programmes.

27. ILO organized seminars and training in Central and Eastern Europe on preventing substance abuse in the workplace. With the support of UNFPA, ECE carried out a project on partnership and reproductive behaviour. In keeping with its educational role in the global fight against AIDS, UNESCO provided support to Governments for policy and planning, especially in curriculum development related to HIV/AIDS. WFP launched the Women's Health and Micro-nutrient Facility, financed by the Canadian Government, thus strengthening projects to improve the nutritional and health status of women and children.

Public outreach and information dissemination

28. The Department of Public Information activities on women and health ranged from the production of a background article on the right to reproductive health to a host of seminars, lectures, radio and television programmes, and newspaper articles on various aspects of women's health issues, including HIV/AIDS. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) convened the Second International Consultation on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights, which aimed to elaborate guidelines on promoting and protecting respect for human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS. UNICEF promoted radio programmes aimed at women, which discussed the rights of girls in the areas of health and education and aired at popular times. WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA issued a policy statement on female genital mutilation, and the Division for the Advancement of Women ensured that this information was available on WomenWatch, the Internet gateway to the United Nations information on women. Reference materials on eligibility criteria for the use of contraceptives have been developed and widely disseminated by WHO. UNEP included gender issues in nine publications it produced assessing emerging environmental health issues. UNDP, within the context of the UNAIDS inter-agency working group on gender and HIV, is preparing publications to increase understanding and encourage more effective action among policy makers and practitioners concerning gender issues and the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

29. UNDCP encouraged women and girls to have a positive self-image, detect signs and symptoms of substance abuse, and find support for substance abuse problems, and produced a video on the gender aspects of substance abuse. UNICEF increased awareness at the country level on women's health, resulting in resource allocations and systematic planning for women's access to health services. At the international level, UNICEF advocacy has facilitated commitments from bilateral and multilateral donors for women's health in country programmes, as well as a focus on communication and increasing women's access to information about good health practices. WHO continued to advocate for sound evidence-based approaches to reproductive health through, for example, its newsletter *Safe Motherhood*.

30. The Population Division provided information related to women and health to end-users on a regular basis. UNFPA mounted advocacy programmes at the global, regional and national levels for gender equity and equality, women's empowerment and the eradication of harmful traditional practices, sex selection, female foeticide and infanticide.

31. UNESCO produced numerous posters and leaflets for special occasions, such as World AIDS Day, as well as studies on specific topics, such as AIDS and street children. Special attention is being given to integrating AIDS education in materials, guidelines and manuals produced or sponsored by UNESCO, including an HIV/AIDS/STDs education for prevention brochure, summarizing the main outcomes of an international conference on school health education and HIV/AIDS prevention.

IV. Violence against women

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

32. The Division for the Advancement of Women, in collaboration with a non-governmental organization, commissioned regional studies on concrete measures being taken to combat violence against women and on the implementation of the actions called for in the Platform for Action, with funds granted by the UNIFEM Trust Fund on Violence against Women, as an input to the forty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women. UNICEF collected information at the country level on measures to combat violence against women, such as social services provided by police and juries for women who have experienced violence. UNIFEM supported the compilation and analysis of information on laws in Muslim countries and their effects on women, particularly regarding violence, and supported national women's groups in creating and maintaining databases and information dissemination on violence against women. The WHO Global Commission on Women's Health compiled international texts on domestic violence. Habitat supported research on urban violence from a gender perspective. The Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division of the United Nations Secretariat prepared a new international instrument on violence against women — Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice — which was adopted by the Economic and Social Council and continued its technical advisory activities. UNICRI analysed the results of its international crime (victim) survey, which focused on women victims of violence.

33. The Special Rappo teur on Violence against Women presented an analysis of violence against women in the community, including rape and sexual harassment, trafficking and forced prostitution, and violence against women migrant workers, a report supplemented by reports on field missions to Poland on trafficking and forced prostitution, to Brazil on domestic violence against women, and to South Africa on the issue of rape in the community. The Special Rapporteur also developed a framework for model legislation on domestic violence to be used by national legislators in developing legislation in this field.

Operational activities

34. INSTRAW was developing a manual for the training of personnel who deal with victims of gender-based violence. WHO was undertaking a multi-country study on violence against women, and will study successful strategies for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and for an appropriate and sensitive health sector response to women experiencing violence. WHO convened a technical working group and other consultations on female genital mutilation. In Rwanda, WHO convened a workshop to identify training needs in violence against women, and is developing training modules for health workers. UNICRI provided training of trainers on domestic violence for practitioners in the criminal justice system. UNHCR has introduced crisis intervention programmes for sexual violence experienced by refugee women. UNIFEM operationalized the $1.2 million Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, funding grass- roots, national, regional and global projects in its first year. UNDP, in collaboration with UNICEF and UNIFEM, supported a subregional consultation in Asia with law makers, academics and policy makers to combat violence against women. Combating violence against women is an intervention area within the regional gender programmes for Latin America, Asia and the Pacific, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States countries. ECLAC participated in seminars and postgraduate courses on the issue of family and urban violence, and presented monitoring proposals for a national legislation on domestic violence.

Public outreach and information dissemination

35. The Department of Public Information issued a new version of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. UNIFEM supported the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women's mission, which raised awareness about the issues of concern to grass-roots women advocates. UNICEF completed the distribution of information materials, such as posters, booklets and a video film, to increase awareness at all levels, including policy levels, in South Asia and other regions, and facilitated networking among non-governmental organizations and other grass-roots organizations to deal with violence against women. UNFPA supported various advocacy and legislative initiatives aimed at preventing violence against women, including the production of literature and audio-visual material; the organization of various forums with

parliamentarians to call attention to the need for adequate legislative and enforcement measures on gender-based violence; and support for men's groups to advocate for responsible parenthood, gender equality and respect for women's human rights, including the right to freedom from violence. The WHO Global Commission on Women's Health undertook the wide dissemination of a statement on violence against women, stressing zero tolerance. WHO produced an information pack on violence against women and updated one on female genital mutilation. The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women was widely disseminated by the Department of Public Information. UNAIDS, the World Bank and UNICEF have initiated a series of issue papers on HIV/AIDS, including one on gender-based violence and its relation to HIV/AIDS. UNHCR has produced a field manual on sexual violence against refugees, and has conducted advocacy campaigns on domestic violence and female genital mutilation. ECLAC published an update of information on gender-based violence in Latin America and the Caribbean, and prepared a study on the evolution of legal treatment of violence against women. ECA was a co-organizer of the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children Symposium.

V. Women and armed conflict

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

36. The Division for the Advancement of Women worked closely with women's and human rights non-governmental organizations to support data collection on women and girls affected by armed conflict, especially rape victims for use by the war tribunals, and held an expert group meeting on gender-based persecution. An expert group meeting on male roles and masculinities in the perspective of a culture of peace was convened by UNESCO, and several case-studies were completed on women's traditional conflict resolution and mediating techniques and practices. The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the territories of former Yugoslavia paid particular attention to vulnerable groups, including women, in her reporting, and raised the issue of rape as a weapon of war. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights prepared its annual report on rape and abuse of women in the areas of conflict in former Yugoslavia. The Special Rapporteur of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities addressed women and sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. UNHCR has designed special programmes for the protection of women at risk, including removal to a safe place. Support has been provided to women's peace non-governmental organizations, and UNHCR led a United Nations inter-agency effort to document best practices with respect to women and peace-building. ESCWA has undertaken studies on women and peace in the region, and held a meeting on the role of non-governmental organizations in peace accords.

Operational activities

37. UNIFEM promoted a gender-sensitive approach to conflict resolution and the management and resolution of conflict through capacity-building and training of women's peace movements, and supported training for women in traumatic situations caused by wars and civil strife. UNICEF identified five areas for policy action and programme implementation for women victims of armed conflict, including the identification of specific needs of women and girls in reproductive health, nutrition, education, psycho-social counselling, and the protection of the rights of girls and women within the framework of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the participation of women in decision-making in the management of services in refugee camps. UNFPA projects helped to strengthen and develop women's negotiating and advocacy skills. In Africa, the urgent reproductive health needs of women in refugee and emergency situations were the focus of joint activities of UNFPA, UNICEF and UNHCR to provide emergency reproductive health care to displaced persons and refugees in Burundi, Rwanda and Zaire, undertaken in collaboration with other relief agencies. UNHCR has provided training to refugee women in leadership skills and mediation for conflict resolution. Similar activities were undertaken by UNFPA in the Arab States, the European region and in Central American countries. UNICEF collaborated with UNFPA, WHO and several non-governmental organizations in carrying out its activities in this critical area.

38. Habitat and INSTRAW organized a round table discussion on women and human settlements in conflict zones. UNIDO developed a conceptual and comprehensive policy framework on employment promotion and skills training in conflict situations. ILO emphasized capacity-building for its constituents in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes to train and employ conflict-affected groups. A compendium

of major training and employment-related initiatives in countries emerging from armed conflict has been developed. WHO participated in a number of activities and workshops, which focused on the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children and women affected by armed conflict, and provided health care and nutrition. WHO provided accessible health services for women affected by violence during armed conflict in such countries as Rwanda, Burundi and Mozambique, and provided training sessions on counselling and ensured that essential drugs and medical equipment were available.

39. Among the FAO multidisciplinary teams in charge of the rehabilitation programme for the agricultural sector in Rwanda, there was a women in development specialist. UNDP promoted the inclusion of women in the development of public policy, plans and programmes for the implementation of peace accords. Women's increasing initiatives in conflict resolution, their struggle for democracy and human rights, and their increasingly prominent role in sustaining economic and social development placed them at the core of the UNESCO Mediterranean and Culture of Peace Programme. ECA assisted in the organization of an inter-agency workshop on documented best practices of women in peace-building and non-violent means of conflict resolution, and collaborated with OAU and the Government of Nigeria to organize a first ladies' summit on peace and humanitarian issues at Abuja, which sought to define the role of women in the promotion of peace. The Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement for Women addressed the summit. ECA also collaborated with the Government of Rwanda and other United Nations agencies in organizing a Pan-African conference on peace, gender and development at Kigali. A women leadership forum on peace was also organized by ECA, in collaboration with OAU, other United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations.

40. WFP undertook training needs assessments to develop training modules and a core group of WFP staff were trained to improve women's participation in emergency and relief food aid management and actual distribution. Technical and financial assistance was provided to reduce micro-nutrient deficiencies in women and adolescents at risk through the new Women's Health and Nutrition Programme. Sensitization training was initiated for staff and counterparts on gender and participation and their implications for WFP-supported emergency and relief operations. WFP initiated training of local authorities and women's committees in food distribution in several countries.

Public outreach and information dissemination

41. The Department of Public Information awareness-raising activities highlighted women's roles as peacemakers. A panel on women at the peace table was organized for International Women's Day, 1997. A technical publication entitled *Women and the Peace Process: Perspectives from Africa* was prepared by ECA for a women's leadership forum on peace in South Africa. The UNESCO culture of peace radio programme for and with women in El Salvador met the concerns and interests of women in fighting violence on all levels of society, developing gender sensitivity on a broad basis. A film on the *Pro Femmes Twese Hamwe* initiative for peace in Rwanda was made by UNESCO, and extrabudgetary funds are being sought in order to film other women's initiatives for peace around the world that could be developed for teaching purposes. A booklet on women and a culture of peace was finalized, inviting women and women's organizations to cooperate with UNESCO in a global movement for a culture of peace.

VI. Women and the economy

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

42. The Division for the Advancement of Women organized an expert group meeting on women and economic decision-making in international financial institutions and transnational corporations, focused on women's role, particularly in top management, in preparation for the Commission on the Status of Women. INSTRAW carried out research on women's time-use surveys, and generated a methodology for such surveys. The Population Division incorporated gender-specific data into a statistical database on international migration, and collaborated with other United Nations bodies in a number of projects to incorporate gender-sensitive data and indicators into economic statistics. A classification system for use on a trial basis that is sensitive to the differences between women and men in remunerated and unremunerated work was developed. ESCAP published a study entitled "Improving the access of women to formal credit and financial institutions: windows of opportunities", which includes country studies on five least developed countries. In its *Statistical Profiles*, ESCAP also published profiles on women in eight countries, containing data on women in the economy, family life and public life. ILO conducted an action programme on labour

and social issues relating to export processing zones, with special attention to problems specific to women workers, and ILO also launched an international programme entitled "More and better jobs for women", designed to heighten global concern for the quality and quantity of employment for women.

43. ILO implemented an action programme to promote gender equality in five countries with a view to promoting gender equality through labour administration. FAO trained statisticians to collect disaggregated data for the year 2000 World Agricultural Census, and training materials were produced. The UNDP Africa Regional Programme had women's economic advancement as a focus area, and many UNDP country programmes supported the economic empowerment of women through credit and entrepreneurship initiatives. That was also a focus area of the UNDP Japan Women-in-Development Fund. UNDP, in collaboration with the United Nations Statistics Division, supported a new project for engendering labour market statistics and the valuing of women's paid and unpaid work. UNIFEM placed emphasis on broadening understanding of the impact of trade liberalization on women's employment and livelihoods, and assisted advocacy for policy changes, as well as bargaining for increased access to credit, technology and markets. That included providing support to business women's associations and to grass-roots producers/traders in the informal sector. UNIFEM supported trade unions and workshops in increasing the capacity of women to influence trade negotiations and research and analysis in government budgeting in enhancing policy-making to ensure that budgets reflect the interests and concerns of the entire population.

44. UNU undertook a research project on the teleworking implications for employment and trade in developing countries, with a focus on gender and social equity. The project highlighted the impact of telecommunication technologies on the globalization process, and assessed the potential and challenges of such globalization on employment opportunities for women as well as the impact of major policies on the effective participation of women in the development process. A study entitled "Economic empowerment of women and their role in the socio-economic development of Africa" was produced by ECA. ECLAC prepared studies on such issues as female urban work in Latin America; social policies, family and work; the integration of women into the new economic model; field research on gender aspects of the labour market's informal sector; and how to analyse national data to prepare a set of indicators that would be useful for looking at the labour market from a gender perspective.

Operational activities

45. UNIDO developed a high impact programme for women entrepreneurship development, and addressed economic empowerment of women in integrated technical assistance programmes aimed at increased competitiveness of women's business, mainly in Africa. Technical and managerial training materials for women entrepreneurs in food-processing industries, together with the training of trainers approach, were developed. ESCAP promoted women's participation in economic development and capacity to handle challenges arising from the globalization of the economy. ECE undertook a project on small and medium-scale enterprises. UNV supported training workshops, including workshops that identify opportunities for women in small business and credit scheme management. ESCWA, in collaboration with UNIFEM, organized workshops for women on starting a business and business incubators.

46. UNICEF supported credit-linked economic activities for rural and urban women in its country programmes as integral components of projects of a wider scope, such as increased literacy, provision of child care, legal literacy and the economic empowerment of women. IFAD included components for savings and loans for women in many of its projects. The United Nations Statistics Division held expert group meetings on the statistics of the informal sector, household satellite accounting and household accounts in selected developing countries, including discussion of gender aspects of relevant statistics and indicators. UNDP had activities on small credit and microcredit, women's entrepreneurship and capacity-building for the female labour force, including female labour based in rural areas. ILO promoted women in private-sector activities through employers' associations and published guidelines. ILO also organized a tripartite meeting on the glass ceiling and women in management to discuss practical strategies to increase upward mobility and career opportunities for professional and managerial women. ILO further established employment promotion networks to enable women to take advantage of the employment and income opportunities opened up by economic reform and measures; developed projects to improve working conditions and establish social protection schemes for women home workers; facilitated institutionalization of home workers' organizations and implementation of cooperative insurance schemes; and assisted employers' organizations in designing policies and conducting programmes to increase the participation of women managers and women entrepreneurs.

47. UNESCO worked to upgrade the technical skills and know-how of craftswomen. FAO organized workshops on the integration of women in fisheries and on coastal fisheries and agricultural management. ECA provided advisory services in the formulation of gender-sensitive programmes for the economic empowerment of women and needs assessments. Professional business women were identified for profiling in a publication. With the assistance of ECA, the First Global Women Entrepreneurs Trade Fair and Investment Forum was held in Africa.

48. UNFPA activities to enhance women's economic status were integrated into activities designed to increase their accessibility to reproductive health services, including family planning and sexual health services. For example, in the Philippines one project combined the strengthening of community organization, service delivery and the training of health personnel with income-generating activities for women in urban slums. WFP introduced the practice of assessing beneficiaries and benefits to determine gender gaps in its project benefits.

Public outreach and information dissemination

49. The Department of Public Information radio programmes and segments were distributed globally in 15 languages, and seminars were organized.

VII. Women in power and decision-making

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

50. The Division for the Advancement of Women maintained its database on women in Government at the ministerial and sub-ministerial levels in the executive branch, and convened an expert group meeting on political decision-making and conflict resolution. Cooperation on gender equality issues was initiated by UNESCO with the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Likewise, the National Assembly of Malawi and UNESCO organized a working group to increase women's representation and the consideration of gender issues with parliaments in southern Africa. Twelve Southern African Development Community countries adopted the landmark Mongochi Declaration, as well as a programme of joint action on women's representation and gender issues. ECLAC prepared studies on the access of women to power and their participation in decision-making, and on women and politics.

Operational activities

51. As part of the women's equality and empowerment framework, UNICEF encouraged the participation of women at the community level, making this a condition for programme support at the country level. UNICEF provided training and collaborated with credit and income-generation programmes to introduce social empowerment and leadership skills, resulting in an increase in women's participation in community-based committees and in training. Women are members of the village water committees in country programmes supported by UNICEF, and also assume roles for management of services after training. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs conducted a workshop to train representatives from developing countries in changing attitudes and perceptions and management practices to take women into account in energy planning, and implemented projects to improve basic infrastructure and income generation in villages that included women villagers in decision-making. UNHCR has promoted the participation of women refugees in food management and distribution decisions, and in camp management committees.

52. UNIFEM provided technical assistance and advisory services in training women in the acquisition of political decision-making skills, and provided training to women parliamentarians and non-governmental organizations supporting women leaders in managing campaigns and in acquiring leadership skills. It also supported strategic coalition and alliance-building, and worked to provide forums to increase women's participation in politics. UNV conducted women's leadership training. ESCAP implemented a project on women in urban local governments aimed at promoting participation and representation of women in urban local governments. ESCAP and Habitat organized a workshop on gender-sensitive urban planning and management through collective participation of women in urban local governments.

53. ILO developed a women in management training manual focused on women managers' roles. The impact of women in leadership positions was a focus area of the UNDP regional gender programmes, and UNDP sponsored an international conference on governance for sustainable growth and equity. At the country level, many country cooperative frameworks included programming activities for women in decision-making and leadership positions. Several

UNESCO special projects aimed to empower women and assist them in achieving more important roles in community development. At an ECA-organized gender networking meeting to address the role of women in alleviating poverty, strategies for improving the participation of women in decision-making were discussed, and ECA organized a training seminar on leadership skills development for senior executive women and managers from 11 countries. ECLAC convened an expert meeting on the relationship of women's non-governmental organizations with the State, and prepared a paper on strategies for increasing women's participation in decision-making.

Public outreach and information dissemination

54. The Department of Public Information activities included participation in television broadcasting on women and decision-making and a panel on International Women's Day 1997 on women at the peace table, co-hosted with the Division for the Advancement of Women. The Division issued *Women 2000*, a publication on women's role as decision makers in various sectors. UNICEF, at the national and regional levels through its country programmes, established partnerships with women's non-governmental organizations to promote networking by women activists, and supported the participation of women's non-governmental organizations in development dialogues and policy formulation. UNV assisted in making two television programmes with adolescents on gender roles, and promoted awareness-raising to establish a women's centre on mass-media campaigns.

55. UNFPA focused on raising awareness about the benefits of greater participation of women at the decision-making level in the family, community, political and government spheres. It established alliances with prominent leaders, such as first ladies, who have helped to put gender issues in the limelight. UNFPA provided support to a project on women's legislative advocacy to create a women's lobby for women's health and empowerment. The WFP video *Women Eat Last* was widely broadcast by international and national television networks. At the regional level, media attention was drawn to the impact of projects that strongly reflect WFP commitments to women. ESCWA with UNIFEM and the Jordanian National Committee for Women, organized a workshop to support woman candidates running for parliamentary elections and organizing electoral campaigns.

VIII. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

Information collection and database development

56. The Division for the Advancement of Women compiled a global directory of national machineries for the advancement of women, taking into account related work by the regional commissions. A directory of women's organizations in seven countries was compiled, and women's needs assessment studies were undertaken by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. UNIDO developed a database of various indicators — social, demographic, economic, political and legal — composed of 109 indicators and covering 217 countries and territories. The Population Division gathered gender-specific data on school enrollment, adult literacy and life expectancy at birth, as well as indicators related to reproductive health, in collaboration with other United Nations bodies, and produced data sets on diskette by sex and age on demographic indicators, annual estimates and projections, as well as patterns of fertility. Work to prepare the UNDP *Human Development Report* included disaggregation of social and economic information by sex and other categories, and a framework for developing country databases on gender-sensitive indicators was initiated.

57. The United Nations Statistics Division compiled and disseminated via the Internet country tables from *The World's Women*, which were updated on a yearly basis. It also updated and extended the Women's Indicators and Statistical Database, and made it available in more user-friendly ways.

58. A number of other respondents addressed the question of data and indicators and methodologies for integrating gender into programmes. In some cases, data were only available for urban areas, rural areas/households being left out. There was a lack of data disaggregated by sex, including data on women's health during conflict and post-conflict phases, and on crime, trafficking in women and drug abuse. Some noted a lack of agreement on key definitions, for example on "heads of households", as well as difficulties in conducting field research. UNIDO noted a lack of clarity of strategies on issues related to gender statistics and information provision. There was also insufficient information and data from Governments on the implementation of women's human rights. Others reported a lack of quantified indicators related to customs, traditions and cultural issues. Work on statistics and indicators, while

moving forward, still fell short of requirements for effective gender analysis. A core set of indicators was under development by the ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities and by the United Nations Statistics Division and the Joint Consultative Group on Policy. UNFPA developed a framework and indicators to monitor women/gender considerations in programmes and polices that were being field-tested in all regions. FAO provided assistance to member countries for the creation/strengthening of gender units within their ministries of rural development/agriculture to formulate national action plans for rural women.

59. ECA was finalizing an inventory of sources of information on women and gender, and is preparing brochures on the status of women vis-à-vis the critical areas of concern for all African countries. At the country level, UNFPA has provided support to undertake data-collection and analysis activities, including establishing surveys, research, and databases on issues critical to the advancement and empowerment of women. ESCWA compiled and disseminated updated indicators and data on women and the family, and supported the collection by countries of gender-disaggregated data. At the international level, UNFPA provided support to other United Nations partners, including the United Nations Statistics Division. ECLAC published a directory of national organizations dealing with programmes and policies on women in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be updated annually.

Operational activities

60. ESCAP held a regional meeting for participants from national machineries for the advancement of women. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs assisted several ECE member States and Commonwealth of Independent States countries in establishing national machineries for the advancement of women, and assisted the United Arab Emirates Women's Union and Associations through methodological support for the design of a national women's strategy for 2020.

61. UNDP, UNIFEM and United Nations country teams provided funding and technical support for the activities of national-level coalitions of government/non-governmental organizations institutions to follow up the Fourth World Conference on Women. UNIFEM enhanced the capacity of regional organizations, women's ministries and non-governmental organizations to address gender issues and to support gender-responsive development planning, and to develop and disseminate gender-sensitive statistics. ESCWA provided technical assistance to member States in establishing permanent institutional machineries. UNFPA was in the process of developing a framework and indicators to monitor women/gender considerations in programme and policies. UNV provided support to gender and development projects aimed at operationalizing women in development policy and strengthening national machinery. The United Nations Statistics Division trained a number of national officials as well as researchers in statistical methods. ESCAP, with the Swedish International Development Association and UNIFEM, helped to improve statistics on women in the Asia and Pacific region. ECLAC assisted ministries of women's affairs in improving efficiency and effectiveness and implementing the Platform for Action.

62. UNICEF supported setting data systems disaggregated by gender and age and multiple indicator cluster surveys in which gender and age disaggregated data collection was introduced for the first time. Habitat worked with non-governmental organizations to monitor government compliance with gender-related developments arising from the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). ESCWA developed gender-sensitive performance indicators in collaboration with the League of Arab States and the Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research. UNIDO trained 20 project staff and government counterparts in addressing gender issues more effectively. FAO sought government support for such measures as the establishment of ministries of women affairs or similar institutions. The Division for the Advancement of Women convened with UNDP and ECE a meeting at Bucharest to follow up the Fourth World Conference on Women that developed proposals on alternative forms of national machineries for women's advancement.

Public outreach and information dissemination

63. ESCAP translated booklets for improving statistics on gender issues into national languages. The Population Division published *World Population Prospects: Sex and Age Distribution of World Populations*, and a wall chart on basic social services for all as one product of the ACC Inter-agency Task Force on Basic Social Services. A wall chart was produced by the ESCWA Statistical Division, in collaboration with the Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research, on women and men in Arab countries.

IX. Human rights of women

Information collection, data development, research and analysis

64. The Division for the Advancement of Women, in providing support for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, prepared a review of experiences of treaty bodies in working with women's human rights groups and other non-governmental organizations and an analysis of reservations under various international treaties. The Division convened an expert group meeting on promoting women's enjoyment of their economic and social rights at Turku, Finland, from 1 to 4 December 1997 in preparation for the forty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The Division and UNHCR continued to implement a joint work plan for mainstreaming women's human rights in the treaty regime as a whole. UNIFEM provided a briefing paper on the integration of a gender perspective into the work of thematic and country special rapporteurs. UNICEF implemented strategies and innovative approaches on women's human rights and the use of a mainstreaming kit in this area by various organizations, including the Commission on Human Rights. ECLAC published a study on the legal situation of five countries of Latin America, which concludes with the formulation of general recommendations to consolidate respect for the human rights of women in the region. ECA prepared a study on the status of ratification and adherence to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It also discusses the reservations to the Convention made by some States. ECA is finalizing a study on strategies for promoting women's human and legal rights in the family in both urban and rural areas. Habitat carried out research on land and property rights of women. INSTRAW prepared a chapter on monitoring women's rights for a manual produced by the Norwegian Institute for Human Rights.

Operational activities

65. The Division for the Advancement of Women staff made a presentation in a training seminar on reporting to treaty bodies organized by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. In collaboration with the Office and the Division, UNFPA sponsored a round table of human rights treaty bodies on human rights approaches to women's health, with a focus on reproductive and sexual health rights. The Office and the Division coordinated efforts to provide information on treaty bodies on the Internet. Interregionally, UNFPA was providing support to the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy in working with law and policy non-governmental organizations to review and promote national policies and legislation that improve women's access to reproductive health care. At the country level, UNFPA provided assistance to non-governmental organizations in conducting training programmes for women and adolescents in legal literacy and human, political, economic and reproductive rights; developing a network for promotion of equal rights within a framework of human rights; and undertaking programmes for the rehabilitation of sexually exploited children, including educating teachers, community leaders and policy makers about basic human rights. UNFPA was also working with WHO through the Global Commission on Women's Health to improve the health status of women and girls and to develop new policy guidelines and advocacy tools aimed at enforcing the rights of women and girls towards the overall goal of health security.

66. UNICEF organized seminars for parliamentarians and policy makers on the above-mentioned conventions as well as a series of seminars and discussions on strengthening the application of a gender-based rights framework for programming for children and women. UNHCR organized a symposium on gender-based persecution with 16 asylum countries, several of which have since developed guidelines for eligibility and the determination of status for asylum on the grounds of gender-based persecution. UNV provided human rights monitors in the field, more than half of whom are women in the case of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala. WHO and the Division for the Advancement of Women, among others, participated in consultations on medical ethics and women's rights to health, including sexual and reproductive health, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Medical Association. The UNESCO Mediterranean Programme promoted projects and research on the subject of migrant women; women's participation in urban public spheres; the preparation of the Third Forum of Women from the Mediterranean: Women, Science and Technology; the UNESCO Shore to Shore Project; the creation of a women's rights observatory and academic network in collaboration with the Women's Commission of the European Parliament and the National Defence Services for the Rights of Women, and work on the *les transversales* research centre and the creation of a working group on the history of women, which will conduct research. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights undertook a project in partnership with the Division to integrate gender into all technical cooperation projects;

the project intends to facilitate the integration of a gender perspective into all aspects of technical cooperation practices and procedures in the area of human rights, from the needs-assessment and project formulation phases to monitoring and evaluation. The Office trained law enforcement officials on international human rights standards, and has produced a manual on human rights training for the police which contains an extensive chapter on human rights of women. The Office also helped to train African women's rights organizations on human rights of women.

67. ECA, in collaboration with the World Bank, organized a conference on the theme "Gender and law: Eastern Africa speaks". Its aim was to increase knowledge on legal constraints to the advancement of women. ESCAP convened an expert group meeting at which progress on women's rights in the ESCAP region was reviewed and recommendations on women's legal rights were formulated. UNIFEM participated in meetings and funded women's human rights advocates, and aided non-governmental organizations in cross-regional dialogues on emerging issues of women's human rights. In addition, UNIFEM supported training of policy makers and members of the judiciary on women's human rights, and supported leadership development institutes for women's human rights advocates. UNIFEM co-sponsored an orientation workshop on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in New York during a meeting of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women for women's human rights advocates from reporting countries.

Public outreach and information dissemination

68. The Division for the Advancement of Women and UNIFEM contributed to a publication of OHCHR on activities to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Division created a Web Site on women's human rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, including on efforts to establish an optional protocol under the Convention. UNIFEM produced an advocacy/information kit on mainstreaming the human rights of women in the United Nations system for use by women's human rights advocates and delegates to the Commission on Human Rights. ILO produced a brochure to guide members of the formal enforcement machinery concerning new trends affecting employment equality, such as sexual harassment at the workplace and new approaches in the field of equal pay between men and women. The Department of Public Information issued press releases and fact sheets on women's human rights. Among the principal international human rights instruments, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child all include specific provisions for equality of the sexes. Since their establishment, the committees monitoring those instruments have always emphasized the principle of non-discrimination between men and women, as well as between boys and girls, in the enjoyment of their human rights under the various instruments. The committees have seized every opportunity to raise the awareness of State parties, when considering their reports and making their observations thereupon, of the problem of discrimination against women and the girl child, either legal and institutionalized discrimination or discrimination in practice, and the need for equal protection of the law for men and women. In addition, UNICEF distributed simplified versions of both the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women for public awareness campaigns and for use by non-governmental organizations and other service providers. Habitat supported a grass-roots and non-governmental organization campaign for equal rights for women to inherit land/housing and security of tenure.

69. ILO has been implementing a project in nine countries on training and information dissemination on women worker's rights, including information campaigns, workshops, setting up national steering committees and drawing up a national action plan. National training materials have been developed in keeping with the capacity of ILO constituents to implement an affirmative action policy. The ILO intensified its efforts to encourage ratification of ILO Convention No. 100 on equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value, and Convention No. 111 on discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

X. Women and the media

Information collection, database development and research and analysis

70. The Division for the Advancement of Women initiated with INSTRAW and UNIFEM a joint Internet gateway on women and gender, WomenWatch, to provide access to

United Nations system information, and held a workshop of women networkers on women and information technology to launch the initiative in 1996. INSTRAW conducted a survey to determine the extent to which women's organizations use computer-mediated communications. UNESCO supported a project entitled "Women speaking to women: women's rural community radio in least-developed countries". The project seeks to establish at least four fully operational community radio stations designed for women and run by women. The radio stations encourage women to speak out on issues of concern to them and to the societies in which they live. UNESCO also supported a workshop for radio producers to produce gender-sensitive radio and post-literacy materials, covering such areas as child marriage, entrepreneurship, reducing women's workload, advocacy for women's education, rural sanitation and women's skills in gardening and marketing.

Operational activities, public outreach and information dissemination

71. The Division for the Advancement of Women published *Women 2000*, No.1 (1996), on the theme "Women and the information revolution". ESCAP facilitated information exchange through computer networking to strengthen a women's information network. UNIFEM compiled a directory of media women practitioners, created a media watch in one African country, and conducted training of mainstream media and journalists in gender analysis. Many UNIFEM projects and activities have media outreach components, including the food technology contest in the Andean region, and human rights training. INSTRAW initiated the preparation of a manual to promote the use of computer mediated communications among women's organizations. FAO formulated a project on an inventory of non-governmental organizations dealing with rural women in Africa, the Near East and Europe. UNFPA worked with national media to favourably influence policy (for example, in Nigeria a television drama series on family health and welfare issues was broadcasted nationwide), and has sponsored a variety of campaigns, such as the production of a radio and television drama series on gender, family health/welfare and population issues; it has also provided support for local drama groups which present works that promote wider acceptance and use of reproductive health services. UNFPA also supported various women-led alternative media organizations. UNHCR trained local women's non-governmental organizations and refugee and displaced women to produce radio programmes on peace and reconciliation, refugee-related information, and health and nutrition.

72. UNICEF incorporated this issue in a number of its projects aimed at the girl child, violence against women, maternal mortality and better parenting. UNICEF undertook a number of public awareness programmes, leading to better coverage and a more sensitive portrayal of gender issues. The Department of Public Information held workshops for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries on a variety of topics, including gender equality. The Department's information centres organized television programmes and workshops, and gave talks on such issues as empowerment of women through the media. Habitat and UNESCO sponsored a workshop for women in the media just before Habitat II giving them the technical skills necessary to disseminate information on the Conference. UNESCO reinforced the network, giving special attention to the presence of women on the information highways through the communication and culture project on women in cyberspace (cyberworld), and the use of community radio by and for women, especially in countries with high illiteracy rates among women. The Toronto and Beijing recommendations for Action continued to provide a framework for empowering women in and through the media. UNESCO will continue to strengthen and support networking among women communicators and women non-governmental organizations, particularly at the grass-roots level, and their involvement in communication and information policy-making. UNESCO and the Radio Netherlands Training Centre organized a workshop on specific management applied to communication for Central American Women journalists. UNESCO provided support to the development of independent and socially responsible media, with a particular focus on raising gender awareness and the promotion of women's equal participation in the political, social and economic life of society.

73. ECLAC was developing a communications strategy that would be supported by three mainstays: (a) the electronic network as instrumental in strengthening the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the work of the institution; (b) the establishment of an Internet home page to be regularly updated on the activities of its Women and Development Unit and the impact in the region of its activities; and (c) radio programmes that would be designed both to confront gender stereotypes and disseminate information to groups in civil society. It was hoped that that strategy would be a powerful instrument for the follow-up of the Regional Programme of Action. ESCWA organized a workshop for the media to raise awareness on gender issues and priorities.

XI. Women and the environment

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

74. UNIFEM completed research on the impact of environmental degradation on women's livelihoods, and land rights and policies in developing countries. The Division for the Advancement of Women, with UNFPA and INSTRAW, held an expert group meeting on women, population and environment to support the work programme of the Commission on the Status of Women. ECLAC published a study on gender, environment and sustainability, which includes the proposal of a new methodology to design research proposals and public policies on this issue. INSTRAW created a training package on women, environmental management and sustainable development.

Operational activities

75. UNIDO developed a training kit for gender integration in environment activities. IFAD addressed the issue of women and the environment in most of its projects. UNIFEM had a number of activities in the area of women and the environment, including increasing the capacity of rural women to act as agents of change on environmental issues, and an effort to increase awareness of women's environmental concerns in Global Environment Fund and Capacity 21 programmes. It also trained women in the area of energy planning for sustainable development through a project undertaken by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the African Development Bank. At the national and international levels, UNFPA supports various projects that link women's economic empowerment, environment and reproductive health. UNHCR supported the integration of refugee women in environmental conservation and management, including tree nurseries and reforestation in asylum countries. UNIDO developed a project for women working in the informal gold mining sector, many of whom are rural women with limited access to information, on possible environmental health dangers associated with their work. Training and advisory services were provided as part of the project. Through the eco-volunteer programme supported by UNDP and UNV, village women's groups were able to improve water management practices of pastoralist communities in East Africa. The ILO created alternative income-generating activities for women fuelwood carriers. It helped integrate in forest management policies and programmes the needs of women fuelwood carriers and the demand for fuelwood. It provided a model for the development of a large-scale credit scheme to support small enterprises and micro-enterprises undertaken by women fuelwood carriers.

76. FAO had a project on local knowledge information systems to collect data on women's contribution to biodiversity and bring them to the attention of decision makers. UNDP/the Office to Combat Desertification and Drought, in collaboration with the Government of Norway, sponsored a workshop on strengthening the role of women in the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa. Habitat and UNEP organized a parallel event on land/housing rights for women at Habitat II.

77. A UNESCO project entitled "Solar villages in Africa" aimed to demonstrate and enhance the use by rural communities of low-cost eco-technologies for power generation and local production of construction materials; and to involve an increasing number of women in using eco-technologies to meet their domestic needs. UNESCO also had a project entitled "Women and water resource supply and use" to improve the quality of women's life by facilitating their access to water resources. ECLAC presented papers on gender in seminars on the issues of development and environment in urban settings, and on population and sustainable development.

Public outreach and information dissemination

78. UNEP honoured 25 contemporary women from around the world who had made valuable contributions towards the goal of protection of the planet. The Department of Public Information produced and distributed a feature article on women and sustainable development, and organized United Nations radio programmes on women and environment. In collaboration with UNIFEM, UNFPA sponsored participants to an international conference on governance for sustainable growth and equity organized by UNDP. UNIFEM provided information on environmentally sound technologies to grass-roots organizations working on women and the environment.

XII. The girl child

Information collection, database development and research and analysis

79. For the mid-decade review of goals of the World Summit for Children, UNICEF supported the collection and analysis of data on achievement of goals in health and education, disaggregated by sex and age. In many countries, the multiple indicator cluster surveys provided benchmarks for the first time for monitoring child survival and well-being. In several countries, pre-Fourth World Conference on Women awareness activities were supported with research studies. The Population Division maintained and updated databases on child mortality by sex in developing regions, and examined the problem of gender differences in infant and child mortality in a published working paper. INSTRAW developed a methodology to measure the unpaid work of women and men. The Division for the Advancement of Women organized an expert group meeting, in collaboration with UNFPA, UNICEF and ECA, on adolescent girls and their rights, in preparation for the forty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

80. UNICEF declared 1997 the Year of the Girl Child, and stimulated actions for follow-up on recommendations emerging from one of several comprehensive studies on the girl child. UNESCO produced and coproduced with its partners (Governments, other United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations) numerous manuals and gender-balanced teaching materials, and provided guidance and counselling services for local educators, while helping them to develop different formal and non-formal education programmes. In cooperation with UNESCO field offices in Africa, national surveys concerning the participation of girls and women in scientific, technical and vocation education were completed.

81. The Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, in recent reports, identified three catalysts that prevent but also contribute to the problem of commercial sexual exploitation of children: the criminal justice system, education and the media.

Operational activities

82. UNICEF participated in discussions with representatives of United Nations missions, and provided advice regarding the various resolutions on the rights of the child. It undertook programmes on legal reforms, training of law enforcement personnel and the implementation of rehabilitation programmes, and supported a three-day seminar for senior government officials, scholars and non-governmental organizations to review and discuss problems facing girls. UNICEF, in collaboration with the organization End Child Prostitution and Trafficking of Children and the non-governmental organization Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, planned to form a technical advisory group at the global level to facilitate information exchange, make available specific expertise, and encourage project collaboration and support established monitoring mechanisms. UNICEF has a number of projects within its country programmes focused on the rights of the girl child.

83. The ILO addressed the issue of girls in the workplace through a number of programmes carried out under the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. At the national level, the ILO supported action programmes for the girl worker in a number of countries. UNFPA demonstrated its commitment to promoting the well-being of children, especially girl children, by addressing the reproductive health-care needs of adolescents in its programmes. Examples include assistance to Governments and non-governmental organizations in incorporating adolescent reproductive health information, education and communication activities, as well as counselling and services into national programmes, and the establishment of multi-purpose centres for youth, which, *inter alia*, provide reproductive health counselling, outreach activities, referral and other services. UNFPA programmes increasingly addressed the issue of the sexual abuse of girls, incorporating training, sensitization and referral systems within the education and health systems to adequately care for girls who had experienced violence. In countries with high female illiteracy and low proportions of girls in primary schools, UNFPA programmes promoted the education of girls in the development of population policies and advocacy campaigns. A UNESCO project on scientific technical and vocational education for girls was launched to enhance access to science, technical and vocational education, to achieve a gender-balanced environment and to sensitize policy-makers to those issues.

Public outreach and information dissemination

84. Department of Public Information activities on the girl child included radio programmes, workshops and seminars on specific topics, ranging from the sexual exploitation of

children to the problems of adolescents. UNICEF and UNFPA provided public awareness and multidisciplinary services addressing adolescent needs, as well as the needs of very young and pre-adolescent girls. ECA produced and disseminated a study entitled "Traditional and cultural practices harmful to the girl child", which addresses various practices that prevent the girl child from realizing her full potential, the prevalence of such practices and strategies for eliminating them.